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SUBJECT: ANGOLA: POLITICAL ROUNDUP

1. (U) SUMMARY

- Supreme Court Proscribes 19 Political Parties
- Ministries Improve Documentation of Children
- Sixty Cuban Doctors Arrive In Luanda
- Angola Reestablishes Relations With Togo
- Angola and North Korea Re-affirm Military Cooperation
- MPLA Parliamentarian Criticizes Angola's "New Elite"

Supreme Court Proscribes 19 Political Parties

12. (U) On June 26, Supreme Court President Cristiano Andre announced the court's proscription of 19 political parties, thereby reducing the number of legal political parties to 107. This move stems from the Supreme Court's continuing investigation of all registered political parties. The investigation is looking for registration anomalies such as registration documents with falsified signatures, parties with no physical headquarters, and parties with less than the 15,000 members required to obtain legal status. Other parties are expected to be proscribed in the coming months as investigations continue.

13. (U) COMMENT: The only outcry about the court's decision came from the proscribed parties, who now find themselves off the government teat. Although 126 parties have been on the books since the multi-party system was introduced in 1991, only 15 or so show signs of genuine political activity. Most political parties surface only when the GRA announces its intent to disburse funds, which the government generally disburses equally among parties rather than proportionally based on party size. Fewer parties mean more money in the trough for those who remain, and this move is not seen as a precursor to a widespread crackdown on active opposition parties.

Ministries Improve Documentation of Children

14. (U) On June 25, in efforts to improve service delivery and mitigate the problem of undocumented citizens, the Justice and Health Ministries launched the "register at birth" campaign in all public health clinics. Birth certificates can now be issued in clinics, freeing parents from having to travel to the provincial Ministry of Justice for registration. Certificates can be issued at birth, at the child's first medical examination before age five, or upon enrollment in a public school.

Sixty Cuban Doctors Arrive In Luanda

15. (U) Under a contract between the Governments of Cuba and Angola, sixty Cuban doctors arrived recently in Luanda to

work in medical facilities throughout the province. The sixty doctors have been sent to the municipalities of Kilamba Kiaxi (17), Samba (2), Rangel (2), Sambizanga (2), Maianga (3), Viana (11), Ingombota (7), Cazenga (12) and Cacuaco (4). Additional doctors are expected to arrive in the coming months.

¶6. (SBU) Comments: This contract is only a small step towards plugging the holes in Angola's health care sector. Though Cubans medical professionals have a long history of work in Angola - many have Angolan-born children that are essentially stateless - this is the first time the GRA has publicly announced the arrival of Cuban doctors since the withdrawal of Cuban troops during the civil war. Publicity about the Cuban doctors may be intended to show government efforts to improve medical care before the next rainy season starts.

#### Angola Reestablishes Relations With Togo

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¶7. (U) On June 26, Togolese President Faure Gnassingbe began the first official visit by a Togolese leader to Angola. Togo and Angola's relations have been chilly since Angola's independence, when it was confirmed that then President Gnassingbe Eyadema supported UNITA and not the MPLA-led government. Fence mending began in 2005, when Gnassingbe turned military hardware stored in Togo by UNITA over to the GRA.

¶8. (SBU) COMMENTS: Political observers believe President Gnassingbe's visit will be used to push Togo's request for compensation for the military hardware turnover and expelling UNITA from Togo. Reports state that the GRA pledged in return to assist Togo with its energy crisis, potentially through the sale of crude oil at discount prices.

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#### Angola and North Korea Re-affirm Military Cooperation

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¶9. (U) After an early June trip to China to find companies interested in funding Angolan defense projects, Angolan Minister of Defense Kundy Paihama spent four days in North Korea to reinforce military cooperation between the two countries and to lay the framework for an official bilateral accord. Paihama called military cooperation between the two countries "excellent" and noted long historical ties, specifically North Korea's help with Angola's struggle for independence.

#### MPLA Parliamentarian Criticizes "New Elite"

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¶10. (U) MPLA Parliamentarian Joao Melo strongly criticized those he classified as "new money" in Angola. In a Radio Ecclesia public debate, Joao Melo questioned the source of this new-found wealth and said that, like most newly rich in Africa, they are "exhibitionists and consumers" who spend rather than produce wealth. He praised Asia as an example of wealth production, stating that the higher investment levels there create more employment and wealth. Joao Melo called for investigations into allegations of corruption in the nouveau riche. (NOTE: It is widely believed that Angola's "new elite" are mainly MPLA members closely associated to President Dos Santos. END NOTE.)  
FERNANDEZ